

Late Backup

#40 – Micro units – Riley amendment

WHEREAS, the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan calls out Austin’s limited housing choices and rising housing costs, and recognizes the need for a variety of housing types to meet the financial and lifestyle needs of Austin’s diverse population; and

WHEREAS, Imagine Austin also identifies the need to retain the character of older, inner-city neighborhoods by accommodating growth along corridors and major roadways; and

WHEREAS, micro-unit housing is an efficient and cost-effective housing choice developed and utilized in many of Austin’s peer cities; and

WHEREAS, micro-unit housing most often appeals single people, who make up over a third of Austin’s population; and

WHEREAS, decoupling parking from housing costs—i.e., renting or selling parking separately, rather than automatically including it in the price of the living space— typically results in a demand reduction of up to 30%; and

WHEREAS, micro-unit development offers the potential of placing more affordable dwelling units within reach of those who want to live an urban lifestyle, often accompanied by reduced car ownership; and

WHEREAS, Council passed resolution 20140123-059 asking the City Manager to identify best practices and code amendments that would encourage micro-unit development; and

WHEREAS, the March 18, 2014 staff memo identified the primary zoning code constraints that may be inhibiting micro-unit development in Austin as minimum site area requirements and parking requirements; NOW THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL

The City Council initiates amendments to Title 25 (Land Development) of the City Code and directs the City Manager to develop an ordinance that reduces or eliminates parking requirements and reduces or eliminates site area requirements for dwelling units under 500 square feet, with decoupled parking, located on core transit corridors, future core transit corridors, and Transit Oriented Development Districts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED

The amendment process should include consideration of how the provisions allowing micro-units should be integrated with current provisions for Vertical Mixed Use development, particularly in regard to affordable housing requirements.

The City Manager is ~~further~~ directed to seek input from housing stakeholders and the Community Development Commission; and return this ordinance to the City Council within 120 days.